United Nations

Daily Highlights

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FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- General Assembly adopts 158-item agenda for forty-ninth session, including new item on situation in occupied territories of Croatia.
- Secretary-General, addressing United Nations staff, stresses need for clarity of vision and new culture of commitment within Organization.
- United Nations appeals for $61 million to provide humanitarian aid to 3.6 million Angolans through December.
- Special Representative Akashi urges major donors to Sarajevo action plan to seek imaginative ways of improving conditions in city.
- Mozambican election campaign begins officially, with 81 per cent of electorate registered to vote.
- Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and Caribbean to hold sixth session in Argentina from 25 to 29 September.

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The General Assembly today adopted a 158-item agenda for its forty-ninth session. Three new items will be considered in plenary: the report of the International Tribunal on war crimes committed in the former Yugoslavia; commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War; and observer status for the South Pacific Forum in the General Assembly. A new item on the situation in the occupied territories of Croatia will be considered in the Fourth Committee (Special Political and Decolonization), while another on criteria for the granting of observer status in the General Assembly will be considered in the Sixth Committee (Legal).

The Assembly also included in its current agenda an item on observer status for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. President Amara Essy (Côte d'Ivoire) reminded the Assembly that the General Committee had decided to defer making a recommendation on the allocation of that item and the item on an Agenda for Development.

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The Assembly decided that a previous sub-agenda item on the report of the International Conference on Population and Development would be on the current agenda as a separate item. It would be considered directly in plenary, on the understanding that action would be taken in the Second Committee (Economic and Financial).

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali today said that clarity of vision and purpose and a new culture of commitment were needed in the United Nations. He also spoke of a need for greater cohesion within the system as a whole, and for better communication between managers and staff, between the Secretariat and Member States and between the Organization and world public opinion. He made those comments in an address to United Nations staff at Headquarters.

The Secretary-General said that the international system was in a state of transition, and that the growing demands on the United Nations exceeded the means provided for meeting them. International civil servants were in the front-line of change, and it was better to adapt than to attempt to preserve old methods of approach. The Organization was under strain and under scrutiny, but its staff must continue to strive for the highest standards of service to the international community. He pledged his full support for that common effort.

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The United Nations has appealed for $61 million to provide humanitarian aid to 3.6 million Angolans suffering the effects of continued armed conflict in their country. That amount represents the estimated shortfall in funding for relief activities through December.

The World Food Programme (WFP) needs some $28 million -- the largest component of the appeal -- to provide more than 230,000 metric tons of food aid. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is seeking $9.3 million, and smaller sums are being sought by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Health Organization (WHO) and other United Nations agencies.

Humanitarian activities in Angola have suffered greatly in recent months as a result of intensified fighting, problems of access in affected areas and the increased number of security incidents. Nevertheless, United Nations agencies are again operating in all provinces and have made progress in distributing food aid, providing immunizations and planning for a nation-wide agricultural campaign.

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Special Representative Yasushi Akashi has urged major donors to the United Nations action plan for Sarajevo to seek imaginative ways to improve

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conditions for the city's residents this winter. In a message to a meeting of donors in Vienna on Tuesday, he said hopes for progress towards peace and the restoration of essential services in Sarajevo had not been fully realized.

In many ways, access to the city was more difficult now than it had been in the spring, Mr. Akashi continued. He appealed to the Bosnian parties to continue to cooperate with the Special Coordinator for Sarajevo, William Eagleton, whose efforts were dedicated to restoring normal conditions in the city.

The United Nations plan for Sarajevo aims to re-establish such services as water, gas, garbage removal, electricity and education, in accordance with Security Council resolution 900 (1994).

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The campaign for Mozambique's national elections on 27 and 28 October officially began yesterday, according to a United Nations spokesman. Almost 6.4 million voters -- 81 per cent of the electorate -- have been registered, and all of the presidential candidates have signed a code of conduct for the elections.

Meanwhile, the new Mozambican Defence Force (FADM) has been formed, with a strength of 12,000 troops. That action followed the demobilization of the Mozambican Armed Forces (FAM) and the Mozambique National Resistence Movement (RENAMO) forces. Some 106,000 weapons were collected from the demobilized troops, and another 42,000 from paramilitary elements.

In a presidential statement on 7 September, the Security Council expressed cautious optimism that Mozambique would achieve democracy, lasting peace and responsible representative government. It reiterated its intention to endorse the results of the elections provided that voting was free and fair.

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The sixth session of the Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean will be held at Mar del Plata, Argentina, from 25 to 29 September. The Conference, which is being organized by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), will serve as a regional preparatory meeting for the 1995 World Conference on Women. It will be opened by President Carlos Menem of Argentina.

The Conference will evaluate the situation of women in Latin America and the Caribbean, and approve a Regional Action Programme for 1995-2001. Topics for discussion will include economic and social participation, health, education, and violence against women.

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